



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4577

Introduced 2/3/2026, by Rep. Laura Faver Dias

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/10-22.18

from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.18

Amends the School Code regarding the establishment of kindergartens. With respect to a provision stating that kindergarten should provide opportunities for play-based learning, defines: (1) "play-based learning" as either guided play or student-initiated play; (2) "guided play" as intentional teacher-directed play with activities set up and led by a teacher that are aligned to learning goals or standards; and (3) "student-initiated play" as child-selected opportunities to build, pretend, create, move, or explore in an environment intentionally curated by a teacher to align with learning goals or standards.

LRB104 17463 LNS 30889 b

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section
5 10-22.18 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/10-22.18) (from Ch. 122, par. 10-22.18)
7 Sec. 10-22.18. Kindergartens.

8 (a) As used in this Section:

9 "Guided play" means intentional teacher-directed play with
10 activities set up and led by a teacher that are aligned to
11 learning goals or standards.

12 "Play-based learning" means either guided play or
13 student-initiated play.

14 "Student-initiated play" means child-selected
15 opportunities to build, pretend, create, move, or explore in
16 an environment intentionally curated by a teacher to align
17 with learning goals or standards.

18 To establish kindergartens for the instruction of children
19 between the ages of 4 and 6 years and to pay the necessary
20 expenses thereof out of the school funds of the district.
21 Until the 2027-2028 school year, upon petition of at least 50
22 parents or guardians of children between the ages of 4 and 6,
23 residing within any school district and within one mile of the

1 public school where such kindergarten is proposed to be
2 established, the board of directors shall, if funds are
3 available, establish a kindergarten in connection with the
4 public school designated in the petition and maintain it as
5 long as the annual average daily attendance therein is not
6 less than 15. Until the 2027-2028 school year, the board may
7 establish a kindergarten with half-day attendance or with
8 full-day attendance; however, if the board establishes
9 full-day kindergarten, it shall also establish half-day
10 kindergarten. Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, each
11 school board must establish a kindergarten with full-day
12 attendance and may establish a kindergarten with half-day
13 attendance. Full-day and half-day kindergarten should be
14 developmentally appropriate and provide opportunities for
15 play-based learning. No one shall be employed to teach in a
16 kindergarten who does not hold a license as provided by law.

17 (b) An elementary or unit school district that does not
18 offer full-day kindergarten as of October 1, 2022, may, by
19 action of the State Board of Education, apply for an extension
20 of the 2027-2028 school year implementation deadline for 2
21 additional years if one of the following criteria are met:

22 (1) the school district is funded below 76% of
23 adequacy according to the Evidence-Based Funding formula
24 under Section 18-8.15 of this Code in Fiscal Year 2023;

25 (2) the school district is ranked in the top 25% of
26 capital funding need by the Full-Day Kindergarten Task

1 Force, but has yet to receive capital funding as of the
2 date of the application; or

3 (3) the school district meets a criterion set by the
4 State Board of Education based on the Full-Day
5 Kindergarten Task Force's recommendations under subsection
6 (b) of Section 10-22.18e of this Code.

7 (Source: P.A. 102-894, eff. 5-20-22; 103-410, eff. 8-2-23.)